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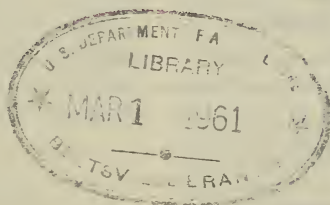
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How To Get Help Under the WATERSHED PROTECTION AND FLOOD PREVENTION ACT



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Soil Conservation Service

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How to Get Help Under the

WATERSHED PROTECTION AND FLOOD PREVENTION ACT (P. L. 566)

By Watershed Planning Branch, Soil Conservation Service

WHEREVER YOU LIVE, you are within a watershed. Your farm, ranch, home on a townlot, or your business in the city are all within the natural boundaries of some watershed. All the lands and waters of the Nation are bounded by natural drainage divides.

Watersheds are of all sizes. A few acres in a farm field drain into a single gully or grassed waterway. Or many small watersheds together may cover nearly half a continent as do those of the Mississippi River and its tributaries.

In your watershed, you may have to share with all others there the tragedies of floods, washed-away land, mud-filled lakes, and water shortages. You also share with others the fruits of watershed protection, development, and flood prevention.

WATERSHED PROTECTION MOVES FORWARD

For years we have been moving toward more intensive watershed protection and development. Watershed conservation was a basic idea in the Executive Order of 1891 which set aside the National Forest reserves. From its beginning, the Soil Conservation Service has stressed the need for planning and treating entire watersheds. In 1933, as the Soil Erosion Service in the Department of the Interior, its first erosion-control demonstrations were on a watershed basis. In 1935, Public Law 46 created the Soil Conservation Service in the Department of Agriculture and expanded its responsibility.

Working with individual farmers and ranchers, the Service early learned the measures needed for good land use and protection and for water conservation and

use. But 20 years ago local people were not generally organized for group work and did not have State-given legal authority to plan and carry out their own programs of soil and water conservation.

Beginning in 1937, the States passed laws that authorized farmers and ranchers to organize and govern soil conservation districts. These local districts, now totaling 2,674 throughout the Nation, are dedicated wholly to planning and applying soil and water conservation measures to agricultural land. Some districts *have watershed boundaries*; all have small watersheds within their boundaries and are parts of larger watersheds.

Farmers and ranchers in these soil conservation districts are now planning and carrying out complete conservation programs on their own farms and ranches with technical, financial, educational, and other help from State and Federal Governments. Also some group or community work is being done in solving drainage, irrigation, or small watershed problems. Townspeople are helping in many ways, too. At the same time, Federal and State agencies responsible for



public lands are carrying out soil and water conservation programs on these lands.

District and other leaders, however, recognized long ago that an unbridged gap existed between the effective conservation work done by individual farmers and ranchers on their own land or by

Federal and State agencies on public lands and the large downstream dams and other developments on major rivers. In many cases, landowners were unable to complete their own conservation programs because of flooding and other problems they could not solve as individuals.

Federal legislation to help local organizations bridge the gap between soil and water conservation work on individual farms and the downstream dams has come in three stages.

The Flood Control Act of 1936 was the first Federal law to recognize the need for runoff and waterflow retardation and soil-erosion control on watersheds as a principal means of flood control. Responsibility for upstream flood control was assigned to the Department of Agriculture. World War II delayed the beginning of operations under this law. Since 1947, however, upstream planning and treatment with all measures needed to conserve soil and water and to reduce flood and sediment damage have been underway in 11 watersheds, covering about 30 million acres.

The second Federal action came in 1953 when Congress appropriated \$5 million with which 60 pilot watershed projects were started. One objective was to demonstrate the benefits of combining soil and water conservation on the land with upstream flood-prevention structures. The other was to find out the best ways to achieve local-State-Federal teamwork in planning and carrying out watershed protection and development.

In 1954 the Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Act (Public Law 566, 83d Cong.) was passed. It provides for a new project-type approach to soil- and water-resource development, use, and conservation.

A NEW APPROACH TO WATERSHED PROTECTION AND FLOOD PREVENTION

Under the Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Act, each project will be a local undertaking with Federal help, not a Federal project with local help.

The Act places full responsibility for

starting small watershed projects on local people who will act through their own organizations. Only local organizations can initiate a project. Federal help cannot be given if the project is disapproved by the State. The policy of the Depart-



ment of Agriculture is to help only when the State takes affirmative action to approve an application for Federal help.

Under Public Law 566, the Secretary of Agriculture is authorized to give technical and financial aid to local organizations in planning and carrying out works of improvement for (1) flood prevention or (2) the agricultural phases of the conservation, development, use, and disposal of water. The Soil Conservation Service has been delegated primary responsibility for carrying out this Act.

Congress in passing the Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Act made clear:

That the additional authority of this Act should be used to supplement both our present soil and water conservation programs and our programs for development and flood protection of major river valleys;

That the Act will bridge the gap between these two types of programs and greatly enhance the ultimate benefits of both; and

That Federal help should be made available only to assist local organizations plan and install needed flood-prevention and water-management measures that *cannot* feasibly be installed under other current Federal conservation programs.

In this way, Congress paved the way for a joint attack on complex conservation problems that individuals *cannot* be expected to solve with already existing technical, cost-sharing, credit, research, and educational assistance.

GROUP ACTION NECESSARY

Solution of the complex problems requires:

1. Soil and water conservation practices applied as needed on individual farms and ranches. Wise land use and treatment are the foundation for watershed protection and flood prevention.

2. Teamwork of local organizations to do the *group* or *community* jobs that individual landowners cannot do alone.

Land Treatment

Structures and other flood-prevention measures give only partial or temporary aid unless soil and water conservation practices are applied on individual farms and ranches and on public lands of the watershed.

The law, in fact, requires that local organizations "obtain agreements to carry out recommended soil conservation measures and proper farm plans from owners of not less than 50 per centum of the lands situated in the drainage area above each retention reservoir to be installed with Federal assistance." Department policy goes further. It requires that a majority of the recommended land-treatment measures be installed or scheduled for installation above structures wherever the lack of such measures would adversely affect design, construction, or maintenance of the structures.

Flood-Prevention Measures

One type of measure *prevents the destruction of land* and, therefore, reduces the movement of huge and damaging amounts of sediment to stream channels and lower land. Where economically justified, large gullies and severely eroding land may be treated with vegetation or structures. Roadbanks and fills may be protected. Waterways crossing two or more farms may be improved. Plants needed to keep the soil tied down may be protected from fire. Other measures may include shaping and planting of waterways or drains serving more than one farm; lining channels; and building diversions, chutes, drop inlets, desilting ba-

sins and jetties, firebreaks, and fire towers.

Another type of measure *controls water-flow and sediment* that cause damage to groups of landowners, communities, and the general public.

When exceptionally heavy rainstorms sweep across a watershed, runoff may be great even from conservation-treated farm and ranch lands. This is especially true if the soil is already saturated or frozen. The damage from this surplus water may be controlled by structures to retard flood-water; stream-channel clearing, straightening, and enlarging; levees and dikes; desilting basins; floodways; floodwater diversions; and special water-holding or water-diverting terraces and dikes.

Structures for flood prevention will be located and planned to:

1. Protect the largest possible area of land subject to flooding.

2. Encroach as little as possible on highly productive land.

3. Provide enough protection of land now subject to overflow so that owners will be encouraged to make full and continuous agricultural use of it, although they may have occasional damage from major storms.

4. Provide greater protection from major storms where human life or high nonfarm investments, as well as agricultural land, are at stake.

Conservation, Development, Use, and Disposal of Water for Agriculture

Federal financial help is also available for three types of agricultural water-management improvements which serve two or more farms: (1) Drainage, (2) irrigation, and (3) measures to provide a more uniform supply and distribution of water.

Drainage measures provide for more efficient land use on existing farms and ranches. Present drainage systems may be improved. Or new drainage systems may be provided for areas presently used for crops or grazing. The measures include all parts of a group drainage system, such as open ditch or tile, drops, checks, flumes, control gates, manholes, and pumping plants.

Irrigation measures include diversion dams, wells, pumping plants, sluiceways, canal headworks, canal laterals, and main distribution pipelines to carry water to the farm boundary. Canals may be lined. Storage reservoirs may be sealed. Help also may be given with measures needed to conserve and use efficiently present and potential water supplies and to carry water to individual farms with the least practical loss.

Under the Department's present policy, however, drainage or irrigation of land not previously or presently used for agriculture must be incidental to, and not a primary purpose of, the measures for which help is provided.

Help may be given to **provide a more uniform supply and distribution of water** for agricultural use by two or more landowners if the improvements are a part of the watershed plan. These measures will be designed to make annual streamflow more stable; to increase the recharge of ground-water reservoirs; to distribute on a community-wide basis water for livestock, orchards and crops, and other agricultural purposes.

Some Measures Ineligible for Help

Either the Act or departmental policy limits or prohibits Federal help for certain measures or under some circumstances.

To qualify for Federal financial assistance two or more landowners must benefit from any particular measure.

The Act prohibits financial help on the construction costs for capacity in structures for water supply, recreation, or any purpose other than flood prevention. Neither can help be given in planning or building structures with a total capacity of more than 5,000 acre-feet.

Also no financial help will be provided for (1) measures that are intended primarily to increase agricultural production on an individual farm or ranch, (2) supplying or distributing water for other than agricultural use, (3) abatement of pollution caused by sewage or industrial wastes, (4) improvements for fish and wildlife except to offset any losses due to

the development of the project, (5) purchase of land by the Federal Government, or (6) recreation.

WHEN AND HOW YOU CAN GET HELP

Your small watershed may need none of the special measures for which the Federal Government provides financial assistance under the Act. Some watersheds need only the soil and water conservation practices that can be applied by the farmers and ranchers with technical, cost-sharing, credit, and educational assistance already available (see p. 13).

If your watershed needs more than that, however, you and your neighbors as an organized group may now get help under the Act when:

1. Your watershed is smaller than 250,000 acres;
2. Your local organization has legal authority from the State to carry out, operate, and maintain the needed works of improvement for watershed conservation and flood prevention;
3. Your State approves your application for assistance;
4. The benefits of the proposed work are greater than the costs;
5. Your local organization and the Department of Agriculture agree on a watershed work plan;
6. The plan is reviewed by other Federal agencies and the Governor and transmitted to the Congress.
7. Federal funds are appropriated to provide the help recommended in the plan.

Size of Watershed

For Federal help your watershed must contain less than 250,000 acres. All of it must be within the boundaries of the local qualified sponsoring organization or combination of organizations. Two or more watersheds containing less than 250,000 acres may be planned jointly, however, if your local organization requests it in separate applications.

Each area, however, must be a sub-watershed or subwatershed area following natural drainage lines.

There is *no ideal size* for a watershed project. Local problems, needs, interests, and financial ability should be studied carefully before you decide to combine several small watersheds into a large project or to divide a large watershed into two or more projects for separate treatment.

State Authority

In most States, soil conservation districts have authority to sponsor small watershed projects.

Municipalities; counties; and watershed, flood-control, conservancy, drainage, irrigation, or other special-purpose districts may also have this authority. If you do not know whether your local organization has this authority, ask your State attorney general for a ruling.

Only a local organization having necessary authority under State law can *sponsor* or co-sponsor an application requesting Federal help with watershed problems. All other kinds of organizations or groups may *endorse* projects.

Since passage of the Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Act, many States have reviewed their laws to determine what legislation, if any, is required to enable State agencies and local organizations to participate in this new watershed program. During the first half of 1955, 20 States passed 37 pieces of legislation to provide or strengthen the authority of State agencies and local organizations.

Apply to State Agency

Copies of the application form may be obtained from the local State agency or from the State Conservationist of the Soil Conservation Service. These forms show the information the State agency needs for its review of the application.

Your application must be submitted to the State agency to which your Governor or State legislature has given responsibility for watershed work in the State. If no agency has been given this responsibility, your request goes directly to the Governor. As a matter of policy, the Soil Conservation Service takes no action on an applica-

tion until the State agency or Governor has approved it. By law SCS cannot help you if your State disapproves your application.

Your watershed may cross one or more State lines. Many do. In that case, qualified local organizations in each State must sponsor the proposed project, and copies of the application must be sent to the designated agency in each State.

Benefits Must Be Greater Than Costs

The Act provides for Federal help with watershed works of improvement only after it has been determined that the benefits are greater than the costs.

Monetary evaluations are *not* required for benefits from soil and water conservation measures applied to the land, however. Long experience shows that private and public benefits from land-treatment measures are greater than costs.

The policy of the Department of Agriculture requires, however, that benefits must be greater than costs for all independent structural measures or groups of measures for which the Federal Government shares in the cost.

Benefits both within the watershed project and downstream may be evaluated.



Agreement on Watershed Work Plan

The Act specifies that the Secretary of Agriculture, representing the Federal Government, and the interested local organization agree on a plan for watershed-protection and flood-prevention measures before Federal help is given.

Action by the Congress

The plan must be before the Congress for 45 days while in session before the

Department of Agriculture can provide help in constructing works of improvement. If the plan contains a structure with a capacity of more than 2,500 acre-feet, the Committee on Agriculture and



Forestry of the Senate and the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives must approve it by resolution before Federal help can be given.

Available Federal Funds

Federal funds for technical planning assistance and cost sharing in carrying out a project must be appropriated before they can be obligated.

Obligations for planning watersheds *cannot* at any time exceed the available funds of the Soil Conservation Service for this purpose. This ordinarily means that planning obligations cannot exceed 12 months. It also means that some watersheds will have to wait their turn to be designated for planning.

Federal assistance in carrying out works of improvement after the projects have been planned and approved also is limited to the funds available. No aid can be given on new projects until available funds are more than sufficient to meet current-year Federal obligations on projects already started.

HOW YOUR APPLICATION IS HANDLED

After receiving your application for watershed assistance the Soil Conservation Service makes an on-the-spot fact-finding examination of the watershed. This includes an inventory of the physical and economic resources of the watershed and a study of the specific land and

water problems and their possible solutions. The Service asks the responsible State agency and concerned Federal agencies to participate.

As a part of this first examination, representatives of the State and Federal agencies meet with your local organization. At that time you will have an opportunity to discuss in detail your problems, how you propose to solve them, the technical and financial help that may be needed, and your ability to share in the costs.

The responsible State agency is asked by the Service to recommend the priority of help on all watersheds approved by it. Hundreds of watershed groups throughout the Nation want assistance. It is impossible to aid them all at once. And Federal funds are not available to do that. Therefore, national priorities also must be established. The Soil Conservation Service is responsible for establishing national priorities and for making an equitable national distribution of assistance.

In determining the eligibility and priority of your proposed project for Federal aid within your State, both the State agency and the Soil Conservation Service may consider the answers to questions like these:

1. Can the problems be solved?
2. Will benefits likely be greater than costs?
3. To what extent have you and your local organizations already used your own resources and the help available from

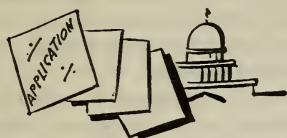


other State and Federal programs to solve the problems?

4. Does your local organization have adequate authority and is it willing and able to carry out, operate, and maintain the types of watershed improvements needed?

The State agency sends your approved application to the State Conservationist of the Soil Conservation Service. He sends the application, the State agency's rec-

ommended priority, and a report of the field study with his own recommendations to the Soil Conservation Service Administrator in Washington.



Planning help then will be authorized according to (1) State-recommended priorities and (2) an equitable national distribution of assistance within the funds available to the Service for this assistance.

PLANNING YOUR WATERSHED

Your watershed has its own combination of problems. So do all the other watersheds of the Nation. And solutions must fit the problems in each. This is watershed planning. In many ways it is similar to soil and water conservation planning for individual farms and ranches.

Each farm or ranch conservation plan is custom made to solve problems of land use, land damage, and water management on a particular farm or ranch. Each plan takes into full account the owner's wishes and abilities, for it is his plan. But any measures for which Federal aid is provided must meet certain sound minimum technical standards.

A sound watershed work plan provides for the conservation, use, and development of land and water within the drainage area. It meshes with the goals, abilities, and desires of the local people. It provides financial help for needed structures and other improvements any one member of the group cannot be expected to build.

Your watershed work plan is a *proposal* by your organization and the United States Department of Agriculture to Congress for specific watershed improvements. This plan is subject to the review of the Governor of your State, other Federal agencies, and the President before it goes to the Congress.

This plan is a guide for your organi-

zation to use in protecting and developing the land and water resources of your watershed. It is a basis for all Federal technical and financial help. After the plan is sent to the Congress, it is a guide for budgeting and using Federal funds when appropriated.

Your plan gives information on:

1. The problems in your watershed.
2. Your needs and desires.
3. The planned land-treatment measures and structures.
4. Estimated costs and benefits of the project.
5. Proposed expenditures of local, State, and Federal funds.
6. Explanation of cost sharing.
7. Provisions for maintaining the planned measures and structures.
8. Timetable for completing the project.

Teamwork in Planning

During all planning stages, Soil Conservation Service technicians work closely with your local organization and all others concerned.

Leaders of the local organization will be called on at every stage of planning to make decisions based on the facts gathered by the technicians and on the provisions of the Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Act.

For example, the planning studies



might show that flood prevention, irrigation, drainage, and other water-management facilities are all justified. But after you compare estimated costs and benefits and take a careful look at your ability to share costs, you may decide that the plan should include only flood-prevention measures.

You may decide, on the other hand, to proceed only with drainage, or irrigation, or other water-management facilities, or

with a combination of any of them. You may do this *unless* lack of flood-prevention improvements would make the desired improvements impossible or impractical.

In some watersheds, the planning studies may show that a feasible project *can-*



not be developed or that the project should be postponed. These facts will be presented to the local organization as soon as they are known. Planning will be stopped or deferred if either the Service or the local organization concludes after a full hearing that a feasible project cannot be developed at this time. Or planning will be halted if your local organization decides for any reason to delay or abandon the project.

The work plan must be the plan of the local organization for solving its watershed problems.

Planning Federal Lands

Work plans also include needed measures and improvements on Federal lands within your watershed.

The Soil Conservation Service arranges for the field office of each Federal agency administering land in the watershed to assist in preparing the work plan.

Structures and other improvements planned for Federal lands primarily to benefit non-Federal lands must be mutually acceptable to the responsible Federal agency, to the sponsoring local organization to the extent of its interests, and to the Soil Conservation Service.

Timetable for Your Project

Most projects will be planned for completion within 5 years after installation funds become available.

Experience thus far shows that watershed-protection work can be completed within 5 years in most watersheds where local people and their organizations (1) are doing all they can with help already available and (2) are willing and able to carry out their agreed-upon responsibilities in the project.

Unusual conditions or circumstances may warrant a longer period. If so, the work plan should justify a schedule of operations beyond 5 years.

Cost Sharing

Cost-sharing proposals and arrangements must be included in the watershed work plan.

Local organizations or land owners and operators are required to bear certain costs, either in cash or the equivalent in labor, services, and materials.

The cost of some services may be borne entirely by the Federal Government.

Costs of some structures or other improvements are shared by the local organization and the Federal Government. The amount contributed by each is determined largely by the kind of benefits.

Under departmental policy land owners and operators receive no additional Federal financial assistance for applying land-treatment measures. The Federal Government already shares this cost through other nationwide agricultural programs.

The basic principle of sharing the construction costs of improvements for flood prevention, drainage, irrigation, and agricultural water management is this:



The local organization will be expected to share construction costs in proportion to local benefits.

Under Department of Agriculture policy, the Federal Government may share a part of the construction costs of structural measures which the sponsoring

local organization would be expected to bear. But the local organization must make a proposal for such additional Federal sharing of these costs and must include a detailed justification of such a proposal in the work plan. The Department of Agriculture will consider circumstances such as these in deciding whether it should be responsible for additional costs:

1. Local people recently have completed some of the needed structures wholly or largely *without* Federal help.

2. Local people have made large expenditures recently, or will have to make them during the project-installation period, for soil and water conservation measures on their own farms and ranches.

3. The watershed is so seriously damaged that the local organization does not have the financial ability or the credit to bear all of its share of the costs.

4. The local organization will bear a part of the costs of installation services.

5. Other significant local conditions that affect the success of the project.

Beneficiaries of structural improvements for flood prevention, irrigation, drainage, and agricultural water management may be grouped for cost-sharing purposes as follows:

Local beneficiaries receive direct, immediate, and significant benefits from a particular improvement. They can be identified easily by name and location of property. They are people who own productive land behind a levee or have property along a stream whose channel is cleaned, enlarged, or straightened to reduce or prevent overflows. Owners of property immediately below a floodwater-retarding structure are local beneficiaries. This is also true of people who own land that is made more productive by improved drainage or by a more dependable water supply. Local governments may also be local beneficiaries because county roads, school buildings, and other property are protected.

Nonlocal beneficiaries, for purposes of cost sharing, include:

1. **Federal beneficiaries** which include all lands, properties, and services owned

or controlled by agencies of the Federal Government that would benefit from structures or improvements. The benefits might include: Prevention of flood losses to Federal property, protection of Federal reservoirs from silting, and reduction of Federal costs for maintaining harbors and navigable waterways.

2. **Community beneficiaries** such as equipment dealers, seedsmen, fertilizer dealers, and other merchants who sell more merchandise, supplies, and materials because of higher net income to farmers in the watershed.

3. **Other beneficiaries** who receive less direct, immediate, or significant benefits from improvements. They *cannot* be easily identified. Their returns from the improvements may be important but so small that surveys to identify them would cost too much. For example, it is difficult or impossible to name all of those helped by ground-water recharge, by the killing of salt cedar and other waterwasting shrubs, or by similar water-conservation measures.

The Federal Government may provide the following services without cost to the local organizations:

1. **Planning services** which include all help given for surveys and investigations and for preparation of work plans



before Federal aid is authorized for improvements. Planning services also include costs for collecting and analyzing basic data needed to develop a sound work plan.

2. **Technical assistance** to landowners who plan and apply soil and water conservation measures on their farms and ranches. Farmers and ranchers receive this assistance from the Soil Conservation Service through soil conservation districts. Additional technical assistance may be given from funds appropriated under the Watershed Protection and Flood Pre-

vention Act *only* as they are required to complete land-treatment measures within the agreed-upon period for project installation.

3. **Installation services** which include surveys, site investigations, layout, design,



preparation of specifications for structures, and supervision of construction.

4. **Application of land-treatment measures on Federal lands.**

Meeting Legal Requirements

Specifically, local organizations or individual land owners and operators within the watershed must meet the following requirements:

1. Acquire land, easements, and rights-of-way needed on privately owned land for structures or other improvements. The local organization may acquire them by purchase or gift. Local costs include removal, relocation, or replacement of bridges, roads, railroads, pipelines, buildings, or wells, whether done by the organization or by the owners.

2. Acquire water rights required by State laws.

3. Provide water capacity in structures for any purpose other than flood preven-



tion. The law does *not* authorize Federal financial help in providing water capacity in structures for irrigation, municipal water supply, recreation, or any purpose other than flood prevention and related features.

4. Operate and maintain structures and other improvements on privately owned land. If a structure placed on Federal

land benefits local people, they share the maintenance cost to the extent they are benefited.

5. Construct, or let contracts for, improvements on privately owned property. The Federal Government lets and administers contracts only on Federal land.

6. Obtain agreements from owners of at least one-half of the land above each retention structure to plan and apply soil and water conservation measures and provide assurance of the application of a high percentage of the land-treatment measures on individual farms and ranches, the lack of which would adversely affect the design, operation, maintenance, or effective utilization of structural measures.

7. Comply with State laws governing watershed improvements, water rights, or specifications for structures.

Reviewing the Work Plan

Your watershed work plan is developed by stages as facts are gathered and your organization makes decisions.

When you and the Soil Conservation Service tentatively agree on a watershed work plan, all others with a direct interest in or responsibility for carrying out or maintaining some part of the project must have an opportunity to review the plan.

The State Conservationist arranges for reviews within the SCS and by other Federal or State agencies that will help to carry out the plan. Any changes they suggest will be discussed with your group. If your organization and the SCS agree, these changes are made in the tentative work plan before it is sent to the Administrator of the Soil Conservation Service in Washington for approval.

Upon approval by the Administrator, the plan is returned to the State Conservationist for final negotiations with your organization.

Your plan then goes to the Soil Conservation Service in Washington for approval by the Department of Agriculture. If your watershed is a part of a major river basin, the Secretary of Agriculture will determine whether the proposed improvements fit into any plans made, or

being made, for comprehensive development of the river basin.

Your plan also is sent to other interested Federal agencies for final review. A copy also is sent to the Governor of your State.

Comments and recommendations made within 60 days by Federal agencies and Departments and by the Governor are sent by the Secretary of Agriculture with your plan to the President. After the



Bureau of the Budget determines that your plan is in accord with the President's program, the President transmits it to the Congress (see p. 5).

CARRYING OUT YOUR WATERSHED WORK PLAN

When you begin your watershed project, your work plan becomes the overall guide and timetable for conservation, development, and better use of all land and water in your watershed. In the plan are your answers to these important questions about each problem you want to solve:

What will be done? Who will do it? Where? When? How? And why?

Information and Education

To carry out the plan, all people in the watershed must be fully informed about what is being done and why and what each group's responsibilities are. This calls for a continuing program of information and education.

Your organization may already have a publicity committee. Experience of local people in the older watershed projects

clearly shows that an active publicity committee is needed.

All methods of informing the public can be used effectively. These include news and feature stories, radio programs, TV broadcasts, motion pictures, picture displays, tours, discussion meetings, printed leaflets, and printed annual reports. Many local, State, and Federal agencies; businesses; and private organizations will help you.

Your information program will be most effective when you tie it in with work that is being done, or that is to be started soon.

Land Protection Comes First

For a successful watershed project, land must be used within its capability and soil and water conservation practices applied according to its needs for protection and improvement.

This is why the Act or Department policy set the following minimum conditions for conservation farm and ranch planning and application of land-treatment measures before Federal financial assistance will be provided for construction of structural improvements:

One-half of the land above *flood-water-retention* or *retarding* structures *must* be under basic conservation plans.

One-half of the land above all *other* structures must be under conservation *plan if* the design, operation, maintenance, or effective use of the structural



works would be impaired or made more costly by lack of proper land use and treatment.

At least a majority of all planned land-treatment measures above structural works must be *applied*, or *in the process of application*, by the time the structures are completed *if* their design, operation, and maintenance would be adversely affected by the lack of such measures.

The basic conservation plans will be the same type that farmers and ranchers are now making with technical help from the Soil Conservation Service through local soil conservation districts.

Practices that must be applied on the land before Federal help is given with structures are those that greatly reduce runoff and sediment or increase the usefulness of drainage and irrigation facilities.

Federal Help With Land-Treatment Practices

Farmers and ranchers will receive the technical assistance needed to plan and carry out the soil and water conservation measures included in the watershed work plan.

The Soil Conservation Service will give technical assistance by:

1. Making an inventory of the land according to its capability for use.

2. Assisting in planning farms and ranches in accordance with this inventory.

3. Aiding farmers and ranchers to plan and apply:

- Terraces, dams, diversions, waterways, contour farming, stripcropping, and the growing of green-manure cover crops and other vegetation needed to protect the soil from wind and water erosion and to restore, improve, and maintain soil productivity.

- Irrigation, chiseling, subsoiling and pitting, contour furrowing, water spreading, drainage, wells, ponds, and other improvements to provide and conserve water for crops, livestock, and forage production.



- Stocking rates, reseeding, erosion control, and other practices necessary to restore and improve range and permanent pastures *not* in national forests

nor managed in conjunction with national forests.

- Woodland - conservation practices that can be applied with general technical help.

The Forest Service provides the specialized technical assistance that farmers and ranchers need to apply the more difficult forestry practices. This assistance usually will be made available through the State forestry agency. It includes forest protection, distribution of planting stock, and other specialized technical aid in forest management.

On privately owned rangelands within national forests, the Forest Service will give necessary technical help with conservation measures needed to restore and improve the range. The Forest Service also will give this assistance on rangelands adjoining national forests and administered in conjunction with the forests under formal agreement with the owners or lessees.

Federal Help With Structures

The Soil Conservation Service gives help for all structural measures on privately owned land, except those for fire protection of forest and brush-covered land. The Forest Service will help with fire-protection structures.

Federal funds can be made available only after the sponsoring agency has obtained necessary land, easements, and rights-of-way and has signed a cooperative agreement for installing and maintaining all structures in one or more "construction units." A group of closely related or interrelated structures that provide benefits greater than costs is a construction unit.

Your local organization invites bids, awards contracts, and administers contracts for all structures on privately owned land. As work progresses, Federal funds are made available to the local organization for payment to contractors.

Other Available Help

In addition to assistance under the Watershed Protection and Flood Pre-

vention Act, you will have the aid of other Federal, Federal-State, and State programs dealing with land, water, and plants.

The Soil Conservation Service will use, and encourage other agencies to use fully, the help available under other Federal legislation to speed the completion of watershed projects.



This help may include:

1. Educational assistance from the cooperative Federal-State Extension Service.
2. Technical aid by the SCS under its national program of assistance to soil conservation districts.
3. Agricultural Conservation Program cost sharing.
4. Credit from the Farmers Home Administration.
5. Farm-forestry assistance under the Cooperative Forest Management Act.
6. Protection of forest areas from fire, insects, and diseases under cooperative programs authorized by the Clarke-McNary Act, Forest Pest Control Act, and White Pine Blister Rust Protection Act.
7. Protection and treatment of Federally owned lands in the watershed by land-managing agencies.
8. Collection of basic data by research agencies.

The Soil Conservation Service will encourage all State and local agencies and private organizations to assist your organization wherever possible in carrying out your watershed work plan.

Improvements on Federal and State Lands

The agency administering Federal lands within your watershed is responsible for installing, operating, and maintaining on this land the land treatment and structural measures provided for in the watershed plan. The cost of installing, operating, and maintaining structural

works of improvement on Federal land will be shared by the Federal agency administering the land and your local organization. Cost sharing is based on the extent of benefits to Federal and privately owned land.

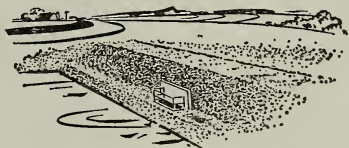
The State is responsible for structures and other improvements that may be needed on State-owned lands within your watershed.

OPERATING AND MAINTAINING YOUR PROJECT

By the time your project is completed you, the Federal Government, and possibly your State will have a considerable investment in watershed protection and flood prevention. Proper operation and maintenance are necessary to protect this investment and to assure the continued success of the improvements.

Your local organization, as the project sponsor, is responsible for operating and maintaining structures and other works of improvement on privately owned land. Or you may arrange with some other agency or organization to operate and maintain these improvements for you. In either case, a written agreement on maintenance is required before Federal funds are made available for any part of the cost of construction.

Structures and soil and water conservation measures on Federal lands will be operated and maintained by the agency administering those lands.



Soil and water conservation measures on individual farms and ranches will be maintained by the owners or operators under agreements with their local soil conservation district. If the watershed is outside a soil conservation district, your local organization must make arrangements satisfactory to the Secretary of Agriculture for fulfilling this responsibility.

